



Bill was a meticulous young doctor. He did everything full out. He tied for the top spot in his medical school class. At 30, he was beginning his practice and held a private pilot certificate with instrument rating and had a total time of 360 hours. Thirteen of those hours were in the Mooney M20C involved in this accident.

Unbeknownst to Bill, the rental plane had altimeter problems. After the accident, it was learned that the barometric adjustment gears for the Kollsman setting did not mesh and this allowed the altimeter's hands to move while the barometric scale did not.

On an April day back in the 1970's, Bill was pilot-in command on

a mission to fly from Milwaukee to Wyoming to look at a campground that he and his three passengers were considering as an investment. The other travelers were Joe, Fred, and Susie. Joe, also a doctor and private pilot, was in the right seat. Fred and Susie, a husband and wife, were in the rear seats.

Dr. Joseph "Joe" Hoffman tells it best:

The flight was going well. We had stopped for fuel in Sioux City, Iowa, and the weather was good. We took off and continued westbound.

I recalled, as night fell on the accident leg of the flight, we were over Nebraska as we began to run into un-

forecast snow. It persisted and became heavy. We were on a VFR flight plan and called ATC to see about finding a route clear of the snow. They said they weren't showing anything and couldn't suggest any alternate routing. [Remember this was 1970's technology.]

Bill changed our flight plan to IFR figuring the snow would end soon. It didn't! It was late now and the snow began sticking to the wings and was so heavy that all we could see was a faint glow from the wingtip lights. We requested clearance to Scotts Bluff, Nebraska, where we could sort things out and get a better handle on the weather.

The faulty altimeter was showing us at 5,000 feet, but in reality we were

